



holidays **PREGNANCY**

Planning a babymoon

Taking a holiday before your baby arrives may be just what the doctor ordered for you and your partner

You've thought about the baby clothes, the baby room, the baby capsule and baby names, but what about a babymoon?

No, that's not another thing to put in your hospital bag or add to your shopping list. It's the trendy name for what might otherwise be called a pre-baby holiday, or one last trip before two becomes three.

Growing in popularity, the babymoon has become a major consideration in pre-baby planning for many Australian couples. Most see it as a last chance to spend time together as just a couple, or a final opportunity to try a particular type of holiday, such as staying at a high-end resort that doesn't allow kids. For couples who already have at least one child, and who can secure suitable babysitting, it's a chance to rest and take a bit of a break before life gets even more hectic.

For other mums- and dads-to-be, taking a babymoon comes from the realisation that it could be some time before they're able to afford another holiday after they lose a salary, or when their disposable income is absorbed by the baby's needs once she arrives. ➔

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PREGNANCY holidays

Don't forget to rest on your babymoon break - relish the opportunity to take afternoon naps and to sleep late

Most women feel they travel best in their second trimester – after the exhaustion and nausea of the first 12 weeks has passed but before discomfort sets in – but, like most holidays, it all depends on when you and your partner can afford it, in terms of both time and money.

Rest and relax

You don't necessarily have to spend a fortune and stay in a luxury resort on your babymoon – it's simply about getting away from your day-to-day life and endless "to-do" lists. In fact, even a few nights in a simple bush cabin could be just what you need.

To help them relax before the birth, many mums-to-be stay at hotels and resorts that offer spa and beauty treatments, including pregnancy massages, foot pampering, facials and manicures. Some treatments, essential oils and types of massage aren't suitable for pregnant women, so it's important to check that the massage or beauty therapist caters for expecting women. Some places will even send a therapist to your room, making for

a very lazy break if you're getting your food and drinks sent to you by room service!

If you have a holiday by the beach or pool, be sure to pack plenty of sunscreen and a good hat, as your skin burns more easily than usual when you're pregnant. (For more advice on what to pack, see the box at left.)

Don't forget to pack

- ✓ A good novel or pile of magazines
- ✓ Pampering foot cream or face mask
- ✓ Best maternity clothes for a romantic night out
- ✓ Swimsuit and walking shoes
- ✓ A baby name book or pregnancy reading – naturally, we suggest *P&B!*
- ✓ Basic medical records
- ✓ Travel insurance (for overseas travel)

The trend towards couples taking a pre-bub break is such that many hotels and resorts are starting to promote their own babymoon packages, combining accommodation with dinners, massages and other treats, all designed to give you and your partner a break.

The perfect break

So what makes a perfect babymoon? The first thing to consider is what you want to achieve, whether it's a romantic weekend break, a chance to escape from work for a week, or just some much-needed pampering. Try to keep your physical limitations in mind – now's not the

time to take that long-dreamt-about trek through South America, or a big adventure holiday through Asia!

The best idea is to choose a destination within a few hours of home – either flying or driving – so travelling won't be a chore. Staying within Australia keeps you close to good medical facilities in case you need them, but it's fine to travel overseas up to 36 weeks, as long as the pregnancy is complication-free and you have the appropriate travel insurance.

More than a holiday

If you're not good at sitting still, you might want to use your holiday to buy a few special things for the baby – hitting the shops somewhere other than the local shopping centre is always fun.

Otherwise, you might want to boost your fitness to get ready for the birth, taking the



opportunity to go walking or swimming every day. But don't forget to rest as well, especially if you're in the early or late stages of pregnancy – relish the opportunity to take afternoon naps and to sleep late in the mornings.

If you can think of nothing better than lying by a pool but your partner wants to be more active, consider staying at a holiday destination with a nearby golf course, go-kart track or other activities to keep him amused. There's nothing worse than trying to relax with someone fidgeting beside you!

Time for two

A babymoon can be a great opportunity to have some romantic dinners or sunset strolls with your partner, recognising that things are going to change once the baby arrives. A bit of effort invested in your relationship now could pay dividends later when you have less time to focus on yourselves.

And, depending on how you're feeling and what stage of pregnancy you're at, you might also discover that a babymoon can be similar to a second honeymoon in the sex stakes. What more incentive do you need? ❤️



Where to go

Novotel Barossa Valley Resort, SA, (above) has a babymoon package including overnight accommodation, full buffet breakfast, one-hour body massage on a pregnancy massage bed, one-hour pedicure and a gift of ThaiGo stretch mark cream, from \$395 per night. Contact: 08 8524 0000; novotelbarossa.com

Palazzo Versace, Qld, has a "What's Kickin'" package. It includes two nights' accommodation, daily buffet breakfast, one-hour rejuvenating pedi-spa, Palazzo Versace bathrobe and towel for baby, Versace-baby rose soap, Cedric (the Palazzo Versace teddy bear), access to Salus per Aquum spa and valet parking; the package is \$995. You will need to check when the package is available. Contact: 07 5509 8000; palazzoversace.com

Peppers Convent Hunter Valley, NSW, has a babymoon package including accommodation, dinner, breakfast, massage or facial, and a bath salts gift basket. It costs from \$559 per couple for one night or \$999 per couple for a weekend. Contact: 02 4993 8999; peppers.com.au/convent

Sofitel Brisbane, Qld, is offering expectant couples luxury accommodation, breakfast and a 40-minute massage at Stephanie's Spa Retreat from \$274 a night. Contact: 07 3835 4444; sofitelbrisbane.com.au